

The Open Mike^{District 2}



A Newsletter From Councilman **Mike Knapp**

Volume 5, Number 4

October 2009

A Moment at the Mike

Building on Assets, Leading the Way



Councilmember Mike Knapp works on a computer at Montgomery College -- one of several key players in the Councilmember's strategy for economic development.

As the nation begins its emergence from the most difficult economic downturn in 70 years, Montgomery County has the potential to lead the coming economic resurgence with a focus on innovation opportunities for the knowledge economy. However, this leadership role will require that we take clear and decisive steps to build upon the technology assets that exist in our County.

As in the past, a part of our County's strategy must include appropriate land use designations and incentives. However, we must look further than land use. We must recognize that other jurisdictions have also been successful following our lead in developing strong programs to identify emerging technologies and create new business opportunities. We must do more.

In the mid-1980's Montgomery County made a strategic decision to establish the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center which was the first location in the nation zoned exclusively for life sciences. In the coming weeks, the County Council will begin its review and revisions to the Gaithersburg West Master Plan and the White Flint Master Plan. Simultaneous to this, it is imperative that the County also establish the economic development framework that will not only help make these land-use plans successful, but more importantly, establish the framework for our County's broader economic growth.

There can be many elements to an economic development strategy -- and just below, I've come up with what I think are ten key components needed to reinvigorate our County's efforts in the life

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sciences and emerging technology arena. There will also be recommendations coming from the County's Life Sciences Task Force sometime later this year. Those recommendations will supplement/complement these concepts to make an even more dynamic economic development strategy.

These ten elements can establish a pipeline to provide access to new technologies, creating synergies between federal labs and academic research to make these technologies more robust, establish commercial opportunities for these new technologies, provide space and a location for new companies, and enhance a workforce to allow these new companies to grow locally. There are a number of ways to achieve these objectives, but it is vitally important that we establish this strategy in order for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan or any other land use plan focused on economic development to be successful. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the County Council and with the County Executive to achieve economic prosperity for today and generations to come.


This is about more than one Master Plan or Zoning Text Amendment. It's all about looking at our county as a whole. Much of my plan, in fact, doesn't even involve the creation of new programs or policies; it's just a matter of making the sum of our parts work that much better for us.

I'm interested in knowing what you think, so [drop me a line](#) and let me know. Working together, we can continue to make Montgomery County one of the nation's best places to live and work.

Regards,



Michael J. Knapp
Councilmember, District 2

 <p>Step up to the Open Mike and make your voice heard!</p>	<p>Open Mike Meeting Damascus</p> <p>Wednesday, October 21 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Damascus Community Recreation Center</p>
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An Economic Development Strategy For Montgomery County

Build Upon Existing County Assets

(1) Establish Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) for partnerships to increase academic research – Montgomery County is unique for counties of its size and wealth in that it is not home to a major academic institution. Fortunately, there are efforts underway within the University System of Maryland at the Universities at Shady Grove to increase academic programs and particularly, academic research. Johns Hopkins University has an emerging academic presence and, as the owner of one of the largest parcels in the Gaithersburg West Master Plan, has the opportunity to increase its world-renowned research in the county. It is critical in the coming months that the County seeks to establish memoranda of understanding that outline how the County and these institutions will partner to establish a long-term plan for academic research growth.

(2) Work to refine federal conflict of interest requirements – One of the most significant aspects for the success of the technology industries in California and Massachusetts is the transfer of technology and ideas from researchers in some of the nation's leading research institutions like MIT, Harvard and Stanford who are funded in part by the federal government. Montgomery County has a number of institutions that rival these fine institutions, yet we don't see the same number of new businesses being formed. Part of the reason for this is the conflict of interest requirements placed upon researchers in federal institutions. Clearly there must be guidelines to ensure that the taxpayers receive the financial benefit of federally-funded research, but we must come up with a better way to ensure that breakthrough technologies are developed commercially and made available to improve the human condition. We must work quickly and diligently with our federal representatives to strike the appropriate balance that allows for this to occur.

(3) Establish strategic partnerships with federal labs – While Montgomery County is home to numerous federal labs including the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology to name a few, there are no broad-based partnerships in place to aid ongoing research activities or for the commercialization of technologies. Other jurisdictions with federal research institutions have established strategic relationships to accomplish similar objectives that benefit local economies and help achieve the research institution's federal mandate and mission.

Implement Economic Development Initiatives

(4) Develop a plan for attracting/allocating life science/technology firms at the county's signature sites (White Oak, Shady Grove, Germantown, Bethesda, Silver Spring) – The County has a number of attractive land use initiatives underway that provide unique opportunities for attracting new technology firms and locating emerging firms. Each of these areas provides different qualities for different types of organizations. For example, the FDA expansion at White Oak provides a location for regulatory affairs organizations, but as the era of personalized medicine becomes more of reality it will be important for many life science firms to be located near the FDA in order to keep up with evolving technologies and regulations. The County must

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State Closes Gaithersburg VEIP Station

FAA Restrictions on Landing Safety Zones at Air Park Prompt Closure; Derwood, Silver Spring Being Modified to Handle Increased Demand

The Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) has closed the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP) station located at Lindbergh Drive in Gaithersburg.

According to MVA, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) recently expanded the landing safety zone of the Gaithersburg Air Park, across the street from the VEIP station. Consequently, the Gaithersburg VEIP station now falls within the off-limits landing zone mandated by the FAA. The VEIP building is scheduled to be demolished. MVA has been working with the Maryland Aviation Administration, the FAA, and the Montgomery County Revenue Authority over the past few years regarding the closing of this station.

As part of the transition to a new contract that took effect on August 1, 2009, MVA is including additional requirements for the closure of this station and the re-opening of another VEIP station in the future, if the volume of vehicles tested demands this action.

The full-service VEIP stations in Derwood and Silver Spring will remain open to serve motorists in Montgomery County. To meet the increased service demands at these two remaining stations, each will be retrofitted with double the capacity for On-Board Diagnostic testing in each service lane. As of December 1, 2009, all VEIP stations will be switching to a new testing procedure that should expedite the inspection process.

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assess the types of opportunities that exist at each of these locations and work with property owners and businesses to establish a process that locates firms in the best locations for their needs.

(5) Establish a technology pipeline with federal labs and county incubators – One of the most significant elements to Montgomery County's success in the life sciences has been the number of federal scientists who wanted to start companies and didn't want to leave the area. As a result, Montgomery County is home to MedImmune, HGS and the JC Venter Institute. Montgomery County has a strong incubator program that can be leveraged in conjunction with the federal labs to provide the space to start the next generation of companies with local scientists. Working in conjunction with our federal institutions we can continue to retain this international expertise residing in our local jurisdictions, as well as find ways to encourage those scientists to turn their research into science the general public can use.

(6) Establish a local biotechnology tax credit – Maryland State Delegate Brian Feldman of Montgomery County sponsored legislation three years ago that established a statewide biotechnology tax credit that has been an incredibly successful program, resulting in companies waiting in lines overnight to apply. The Council should establish a similar local biotech tax credit in the coming year.

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Strategy

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(7) Re-introduce a green tape approval process for qualified technology firms – In the 1980's and 1990's, the County utilized a "green tape" approval process for life science firms in an effort to make the establishment and/or expansion of these firms easier and more user-friendly by expediting County review and permitting processes. Montgomery County should re-initiate this green tape process for firms in the priority technology areas that have already been identified by the Department of Economic Development, including life sciences, information technologies, health care and telecommunications.

Invest in People

(8) Increase access to management talent and provide in-depth support and mentoring from people with experience in starting and growing companies - Having access to exciting new technologies and scientists is not in itself enough to make for a thriving technology economy; it also is vital to have the management expertise that knows how to make technology commercially viable. Through the County's incubator system, we have an opportunity to provide support and mentoring for companies as they are starting out, but we must also recruit successful managers to aid in this process. There are a number of ways to achieve this by using both public and private sector support. We must explore these options and move quickly to put a program in place.

(9) Ensure workforce development – Montgomery County is already among the most educated jurisdictions in the nation with more than 55 percent of our adult population holding bachelor's degrees, and having the highest number of doctoral recipients of any county in the nation. Nevertheless, it is important that we build upon that foundation to ensure our workforce has the skills necessary to work in a knowledge economy. We must enhance programs at Montgomery College, the Universities at Shady Grove and Johns Hopkins to ensure that employers can re-train employees, but more important make sure that our residents have access to programs that will make them eligible for employment in current and emerging technology firms.

(10) Enhance career pathways for Montgomery County students – Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) by any measure are among the finest in the nation at making students college-ready. One of our challenges, as well as one of the challenges for our nation, is to make sure that our students understand the career opportunities that are available to them in a knowledge economy. It is important for students to understand the relevance of the courses that they are taking to a series of career pathways. There is already a nascent effort underway within MCPS and Montgomery College, but this needs to be enhanced and made more robust by working with our four-year institutions and the private sector.

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Chairman's Corner

Gaithersburg West, Growth Policy in PHED



October will be a busy month in the Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee, as we take up -- among many other things -- the Gaithersburg West Master Plan and the 2009-2011 Growth Policy. So far, I've scheduled three different committee sessions to ensure we have time to properly address matters like land use and transportation. I'm continuing to receive e-mails from the Gaithersburg community letting me know of their concerns--and I hope you'll continue to let me know how you think we're doing.

PHED Committee Schedule

The information is subject to change, so please check the Council's website as dates near for updated information. Unless otherwise indicated, all committee meetings will convene in the 7th Floor hearing room of the Council Office Building.

DATE	TIME	MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION
October 8	2:00 p.m.	- ZTA 09-01: Sandy Spring / Ashton Overlay Zone - Prohibited Uses - ZTA 09-05: Burtonsville Overlay Zone - Allowed Uses - Restructuring Plan for Parks and Recreation Departments
October 12	2:00 p.m.	Gaithersburg West Master Plan - Transportation
October 13	2:00 p.m.	2009-2011 Growth Policy
October 15	2:00 p.m.	Economic Development: Incubator program and fund strategies
October 19	2:00 p.m.	2009-2011 Growth Policy
October 20	2:00 p.m.	2009-2011 Growth Policy (3rd Floor Hearing Room)
October 26	2:00 p.m.	- Gaithersburg West Master Plan - ZTA 09-08: Life Science Center (LSC) Zone - Revisions

County Offers Tips to Protect Yourself from Flu

The H1N1 virus is circulating in the community. We expect shipments of vaccine to begin arriving in late October. We will receive vaccine supplies in small amounts to begin with, therefore we will begin by vaccinating those in the target groups (pregnant women, children between 6 months and 24 years, adults with chronic conditions, health care workers and household contacts of infants under the age of 6 months). Eventually, we will have enough vaccine for everyone who wants to get vaccinated. Private health care providers and local retailers will also receive vaccine. When vaccination clinic dates, times and locations are confirmed, we will post information at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/h1n1flu.

The County's flu hotline (240-777-4200) is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Everyone can help prevent the spread of influenza—cover your cough, wash hands frequently, stay home if you are sick and stay informed.

For more information, visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/h1n1flu.

A Census Primer

Making Sense of the 2010 Census

The census is coming.

Taken every ten years, the census defines who we are as a nation. The census affects political representation -- districts can gain or lose Congressional representation based on census data -- and directs the allocation of billions of dollars in government funding. One person really does make a difference -- so make sure you're counted.

Some Census Facts:

- The [U.S. Constitution](#) requires a national census once every ten years.
- The census is a count of everyone residing in the United States -- that's all 50 states, plus Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. It also includes people of all ages, races, ethnic groups, and citizens as well as non-citizens.
- The 2010 census will create hundreds of thousands of temporary jobs across the nation.



Why Your Participation Matters:

- Every year, more than \$300 billion in federal funds is awarded to states and communities based on census data. That's more than \$3 trillion over a decade.
- Census data guide planning for new hospitals, schools and other services
- Census data is used to rank the need for additional social services, including who receives the community development block grants and other grant programs.

Completing the 2010 Census Questionnaire is Simple and Safe:

- The 2010 Census questionnaire asks only a few simple questions of each person--name, relationship, gender, age and date of birth, race, and whether the respondent owns or rents his or her home. The questionnaire takes only a few minutes to complete and return.
- The Census Bureau does not release or share information that identifies individual respondents or their household for 72 years.
- Every Census Bureau worker takes an oath for life to protect the confidentiality of census responses. Violation would result in a jail term of up to five years and/or a fine of up to \$250,000. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share an individual's answers with anyone, including welfare and immigration agencies.

Why Should Everyone Participate in the 2010 Census?

- Census information helps determine locations for schools, roads, hospitals, child care and senior citizen centers, and more.

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The Road Scholar

Major Work Underway on MD 97 at Randolph Road; Woodfield Road Extension Begins in Damascus

Got a road that needs repairing? A traffic light that's out? Is there a street or intersection that you think needs a stop sign or crosswalk? One of my responsibilities is to make sure someone knows about it -- and to do what I can to get you information on your question or request as quickly as possible.

I stay in regular contact with the [Montgomery County Department of Transportation](#) (DOT) and the [Maryland State Highways Administration](#) (MSHA), and provide each agency with a list of projects that need addressing in the Upcounty. Both agencies receive countless requests each week, and getting a response back can take some time. So bear with me -- if you don't see a particular project listed here, that doesn't mean it has been forgotten or neglected, but rather that I haven't received an updated report on its progress lately.

With this in mind, the Road Scholar section of *The Open Mike* provides an opportunity to give you the latest information I've received from DPWT, MSHA, and others on the progress of requests that have been submitted on your behalf. It's also an opportunity for you to [let me know](#) of other projects that may need to be undertaken in your community.

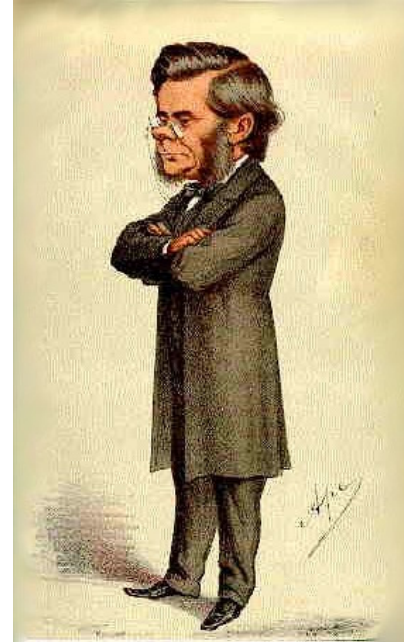
Maryland State Highway Administration Projects

Utilities Relocation Along MD 97 (Georgia Avenue): If you're anywhere near Georgia Avenue, you've probably already noticed the traffic slowdowns in the area. Expect things to stay tangled for a while---this is a big project, and it's been the top priority of the county's state road improvements. Here's the latest from Maryland State Highway Administration District Engineer Darrell Mobley:

As part of the State Highway Administration's (SHA) effort to keep you informed of projects in your area, the Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration [has begun] a \$3 million utilities relocation project along MD 97 (Georgia Avenue) at Randolph Road in Montgomery County. This project is the first phase of a large scale interchange improvement project at MD 97 and Randolph Road. Weather permitting, the utilities phase should be complete spring 2012.

Work for this phase involves utilities relocation around and through the neighborhoods bordering Randolph Road and MD 97. Project work includes relocation of water and sewer lines (WSSC), electric lines (PEPCO), telephone, fiber optic lines, and utility poles (Verizon), gas lines (Washington Gas), roadway patching, temporary and permanent signing and

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Got a question or suggestion about road repairs in your area? [E-mail the Road Scholar](#) and let us know.



Road Scholar

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pavement markings, installation of detectable warning surfaces on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps, cleaning and installation of inlets, pipe culverts, manholes, and tree trimming or removal.

SHA will use variable message signs, barrels and cones to guide motorists through the work zone, and safe pedestrian access will be maintained on the opposite side of MD 97 and Randolph Road during the ADA upgrades. Once the utilities portion of the project is complete, it is expected that the interchange construction will begin.

The project is listed as number one on Montgomery County's priority list. The construction is necessary to improve safety and traffic flow at the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road. Currently the level of service at this intersection is failing drivers. There is a combined average of more than 132,000 vehicles traveling through the intersection on a daily basis.

When phase two, intersection construction, begins, there will be lane shifts along MD 97 and Randolph Road. SHA will strive to keep through lanes open at all times during construction. The intersection construction is necessary to improve safety and traffic flow at the intersection of MD 97 and Randolph Road. Planned intersection improvements include:

- Construction of a new interchange at the existing intersection of MD 97 and Randolph Road, with a bridge to be built at grade on MD 97. Randolph Road will go under the bridge.
- A two-year utilities relocation to enable construction to take place.
- ADA compliant sidewalks will be included where appropriate
- New medians and landscaping will be included within the project limits
- A hiker/biker path will be included as part of this project

It is anticipated the complete interchange project will be done by spring 2015. All work will be done weather permitting. SHA awarded the utility contract to Flippo Construction Co., Inc.

My thanks to Mr. Mobley for such a thorough update.

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Census

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- Businesses use census data to locate supermarkets, shopping centers, new housing, and other facilities.
- The census determines how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as the boundaries of legislative districts.
- Local communities use census data to gauge the financial health of the community and the future of vital service programs. Census data inform a diverse range of local initiatives, such as justifying the need for an after-school program to designating urban revitalization areas.

For more information, visit www.census.gov/2010census.

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MD 124 (Woodfield Road) Dualization Project Near Airpark: Alterations on MD 124 have resulted in restricted left-turn movements onto Lindbergh Drive -- which has been the cause of much concern from businesses along MD 124, who worry about drivers being able to access their property. I brought these concerns to the attention of the Maryland State Highway Administration's Office of Highway Development. Here's what Director Kirk McClelland had to tell me:

This project is a Design-Build (D/B) Project, which means that the final details of the design are performed by the D/B Team based on an approved concept and specifications. Although some interim design submissions by the D/B Team have proposed left turn movements onto Lindbergh Drive (North), these interim submissions were never approved by SHA for construction. The final SHA approved plans for construction did not propose left turn movements at MD 124 and Lindbergh Drive (North). The primary reasons restricting left turn movements on Lindbergh Drive (North) are:



1. Queues for Airpark Road regularly extend past the intersection with Lindbergh, and the left turn lane itself will extend to this intersection. Maintaining left turn movements throughout an opposing left turn lane is an uncommon practice and would be an awkward configuration. Additionally, as queues form through an intersection, further safety risks arise when left-turning motorists attempt to work their way through the opposing queued traffic.
2. Utilizing the signalized intersection at Lindbergh Drive (South) is a safer situation. At this location, all movements can be made, and motorists can access the same locations by following Lindbergh Drive around.

As a result of your inquiry, SHA is currently studying accident data, traffic counts and queue analysis. The purpose of these studies is to verify that the proposed design, which precludes the left-turn movements from northbound MD 124 to Airpark Road and southbound MD 124 to Lindbergh Drive (North) in this phase of construction, is still warranted.

It should be noted, however, that Phase 2 of the MD 124 (Woodfield Road) Project, currently funded for design, will require closing the median completely at this location, thus restricting all left turns onto Lindbergh Drive (North). The reasons for this closure are the same as noted above for Phase 1; however, there will be additional lanes constructed at this intersection in both directions along MD 124, adding more potential conflicts to the unsignalized left turn movements.

The SHA will update a response to you upon completion of these studies.



Speed Limits on MD 108 Corridor: An Olney resident questioned whether the speed limits along the MD 108 corridor had been lowered to 30 MPH, how MSHA determined speed limits on state roads, and which agency is responsible for the speed cameras in the area. Here's the response from MSHA District Engineer Jeffrey Wentz:

The SHA's District 3 traffic engineering staff has completed their review and we would like to share our findings with you. Along numbered roads such as

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MD 108, speed limits are established by the SHA. Along unnumbered roads such as Old

Baltimore Road or Bowie Mill Road: speed limits are established by local agencies such as the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) or possibly a municipal transportation agency. With regards to the "TRAFFIC LAWS PHOTO ENFORCED" signs located along MD 108 and MD 97: we have instructed our maintenance crews to repair or replace these signs as necessary.

The speed limits in the downtown areas of Ashton, Sandy Spring, and Olney are all set at 30 MPH in the interest of maintaining a lower-speed corridor through these denser areas. We are well aware that lower speed limits can be ineffective if they are set beneath the 85th percentile speed. In these corridors, we have found that motorists are generally traveling within acceptable tolerances of the speed limit. Specifically, in all three downtown areas: motorists are almost always stopped by at least one of the signals in the area; subsequently resulting in reduced speeds. In Sandy Spring and Ashton, horizontal curvature also serves to geometrically reduce motorists' speeds; and the presence of schools in these areas further raises motorists' awareness of conditions.

The 30 MPH speed limit in Olney was officially established in 1987, but only recently were signs reinstalled to indicate 30 MPH. Reviews have found that the signs were justified in lieu of what was assumed a 40 MPH roadway; and we maintain our decision that the area in downtown Olney should remain 30 MPH at this time. The 30 MPH speed limit between MD 182 (Dr. Bird Road) and Norwood Road was established in 2000, and the 30 MPH speed limit between Norwood Road and MD 650 was established in 1984. Our research was able to confirm that the roadway has been signed in such a manner since at least 2000 - as far back as our inventory goes.

With regards to your inquiry regarding automated photo enforcement - colloquially referred to as "speed cameras" - the SHA does not currently determine the locations of such devices. Rather, such authority is given to local police agencies on the rationale that in lieu of a camera, they could theoretically position a uniformed officer at the same location to similar effect.

Section § 21-809 of the Maryland Transportation Code contains the current legislation on automated speed enforcement. This section permits their installation when either of two conditions is met:

- On a highway in a residential district as defined by §21-101 with a maximum posted speed limit of 35 MPH, as established using generally accepted traffic engineering practices.
- In a school zone established under §21-803.1.

If you should have any questions regarding this program, you are encouraged to contact the Automated Traffic Enforcement Unit of the Montgomery County Police Department at 240-773-6050.

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Montgomery County Department of Transportation Projects

Woodfield Road Extension Underway in Damascus: At long last, work has begun on the Woodfield Road extension -- the so-called A-12 project --- to connect Woodfield road to the intersection of Faith Lane and MD 27 (Ridge Road) in Damascus. This project will provide a 3,000 foot extension of Woodfield Road from north of Main Street (MD 108) to Ridge Road. The scope also includes improvements to a 1,450 foot segment of Ridge Road from south of the existing Ridge Road/Faith Lane intersection to the Ridge Road/Gue Road intersection. These improvements include:

- Extension of Woodfield Road, as 28-foot wide curbed roadway with two 14-foot wide lanes;
- Realignment of Faith Lane to intersect Woodfield Road at a point south of Ridge Road;
- Construction of a separate 8-foot wide bikeway along the eastern side of Woodfield Road Extended from Main Street to Ridge Road;
- Widening Ridge Road to provide two 12-foot wide travel lanes, two 4-foot wide paved shoulder, and an auxiliary left turn lane at the intersection with Woodfield Road;
- Construction of street lighting, traffic signal and landscaping improvements along Woodfield Road Extended.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are also provided by this project.

Construction will generally take place Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., with occasional Saturdays. A full-time County representative will be present on the job site during hours of construction, and will be available to answer questions about the project.

In order to minimize inconveniences, lane closures will be kept to a minimum and allowed only between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Driveways and entrances will be accessible at all times.

Father Hurley Boulevard Extension: Work is underway on the extension of Father Hurley Boulevard, identified in the Germantown Master Plan as a major divided highway. This road will connect Germantown communities currently separated by the railroad from the Town Center and the I-270 Employment Corridor. It will improve access for emergency vehicles, reduce future congestion, and enhance traffic flow.

Segments of the roadway have already been constructed by private developers. However, access is still limited because these segments do not include links between Wisteria Drive and Dawson Farm Road, or between Germantown Road and Hopkins Road.

The project consists of a 1.2 mile extension of Father Hurley from its existing end near Wisteria Drive to Germantown Road (MD 118). The new road will be a four-lane divided highway with a bridge carrying traffic over the CSX railroad. Two retaining walls will be constructed to minimize impacts on adjacent properties. The project also provides pedestrian amenities, including an eight-foot wide bikeway along the west side, and a five-foot sidewalk along the east side.

Construction will generally take place Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., with occasional Saturdays. A full-time County representative will be present on the job site during hours of construction. The contract duration is 18 months, and we expect construction to begin this fall for completion in spring 2011.

County DOT Requests Stimulus Funds for Projects

The County is obtaining final approvals to purchase traffic management equipment or undertake additional road resurfacing projects with federal stimulus funds. The total funding request amounts to approximately eight and a half million dollars. Additional roads in the county will be repaved using stimulus funds



The Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations has requested \$2.8 million to fund the following investments in traffic management in various locations throughout the county:

INSTALL TRAFFIC SIGNAL UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY / BATTERY BACKUP (UPS/BBU) (\$600,000): Deployment of UPS/BBU units at an estimated 40 traffic signal control cabinets will insure reliability of traffic signal control and mitigate vulnerability of outages in the event of loss of electrical power during a storm or evacuation.

INSTALLATION OF STREETLIGHTS ON MD124 (\$1,100,000) : Installation of approximately 150 pedestrian lights along MD124 between Air Park Road and Rosewood Manor Lane.

INSTALLATION OF COMMUNICATION LINES TO SUPPORT ITS FIELD DEVICES & TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM MODERNIZATION (\$600,000): Provision of fiber optic cable plant along the US29 corridor from the current terminus at Briggs Chaney Road to the Howard County Line (5.5 miles) to extend the Advanced Transportation Management System and facilitate the deployment of the new traffic signal control features and functionality.

UPGRADE TRAFFIC WARNING SIGNS (\$250,000): Upgrade or replace approximately 2,370 traffic warning signs throughout the county with fluorescent micro-prismatic sign sheeting to improve traffic safety. Micro-prismatic sheeting provides superior performance, particularly during low light and inclement weather situations where warning signs are often most critical.

UPGRADE GUARDRAIL END TREATMENTS (\$225,000): Replace approximately 75 deficient or substandard guardrail end treatments at various locations along the Federal-Aid network throughout the county to meet current Maryland State Highway Administration guardrail standards.

The Division of Highway Services has requested \$5.7 million to fund the following road resurfacing projects in various locations throughout the county.

ROAD RESURFACING (roads in Federal Aid System) (\$5,715,000): All proposed roads are classified as "primary" roads, are in the Federal Aid System, and have shown an immediate need for resurfacing and associated patching based upon a countywide Pavement Management Study completed in FY08.

- * Barnesville Rd (Mt. Ephraim Rd to Rt117 Bucklodge Rd; 9.98 Lane Miles);
- * Shady Grove Rd (C/L I270 to Darnestown Rd; 10.28 Lane Miles);
- * Forest Glen Rd (MD97 Georgia Ave to Brunett Ave; 3.62 Lane Miles);
- * Old Columbia Pike (MD198 Spencerville Rd to US29 Columbia Pike ramp; 10.25 Lane Miles);
- * Randolph Rd (E. of Nebel [RRX] to C/L Rock Creek Bdg.; 4.6 Lane Miles);

For more information on the County's overall request for stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) see the [County's ARRA website](#).

Vox Pops

Readers Comment on Budget, Gaithersburg West Master Plan

A Note from Mike: *I receive countless phone calls, e-mails, and letters each day. Most are passionate, many are frustrated, and a few are downright funny . . . but all of them are thoughtful and well-intended. I think readers of The Open Mike will be interested to hear what their neighbors have to say, whether they're across the street or across the county. With that in mind, the "Vox Pops" section of my newsletter features highlights from some of the correspondence and phone calls I've received in my office over the past weeks.*

State, County Pay Driving Need for Budget Cuts

"On the radio this morning was reported another \$300 million shortfall in tax revenues, necessitating more budget cuts for the poorly managed state of Maryland. The shame of it all is that if state employee pay and benefits were in parity with pay and benefits in the private sector, the state's budget would be a good 30% smaller and we would all be able to enjoy a 30% tax cut with no cuts in services whatsoever.

"We can only wonder why our journalists do not pick up on this obvious problem and excoriate the "always right" safe seat Democrat lawmakers that created this mess. The same kind of mess that afflicts Montgomery County and in many other state and local governments across this country that teeter on the edge of bankruptcy. Why do our journalists sleep? They are as adversely affected by government pay excesses as everyone else. And they, like the rest of us, will be taxed heavily as long as they live in order to pay the pensions and health benefits of government retirees lying on the beach. They will in fact be taxed so heavily in fact that they will find they will never be able to retire. Some of the boomers are learning that harsh lesson right now. If they voted Democrat right along they are getting exactly what they deserve. --
Richard, Chevy Chase

Gaithersburg West Master Plan Would Either Spur Long-Term Improvement . . .

I am a long-time resident of Montgomery County, and want to voice my strong support for the proposed Master Plan for Gaithersburg West. I am not only a resident of the county, but am the head of Human Resources in a local biotech. This plan would, without a doubt, create job opportunities and spur long-term investments, provide great access to local companies, transportation and all while maintaining a balance of green space. I highly encourage you to pass this proposal that will advance the health, science and education environment of the county." --
Marge

. . . Or Threaten Quality of Life in the Area

"I write to express my opposition to the plans for an expanded 'Life Science Center' in the Gaithersburg Master Plan. I believe that the development of this large project will only further urbanize our county and cause enormous traffic congestion, threatening both the character and the quality of life of our area. It will also put pressure on the road system, and add to the demand for a Techway connection to Virginia, with dire consequences for either the Agricultural reserve or neighborhoods such as my own, which you represent.

"Our county does not need more development! What we need is the prudent use of our existing resources to maintain the many assets that have drawn us to live in this lovely area, and to enhance and protect its rural character." -- Mitzi